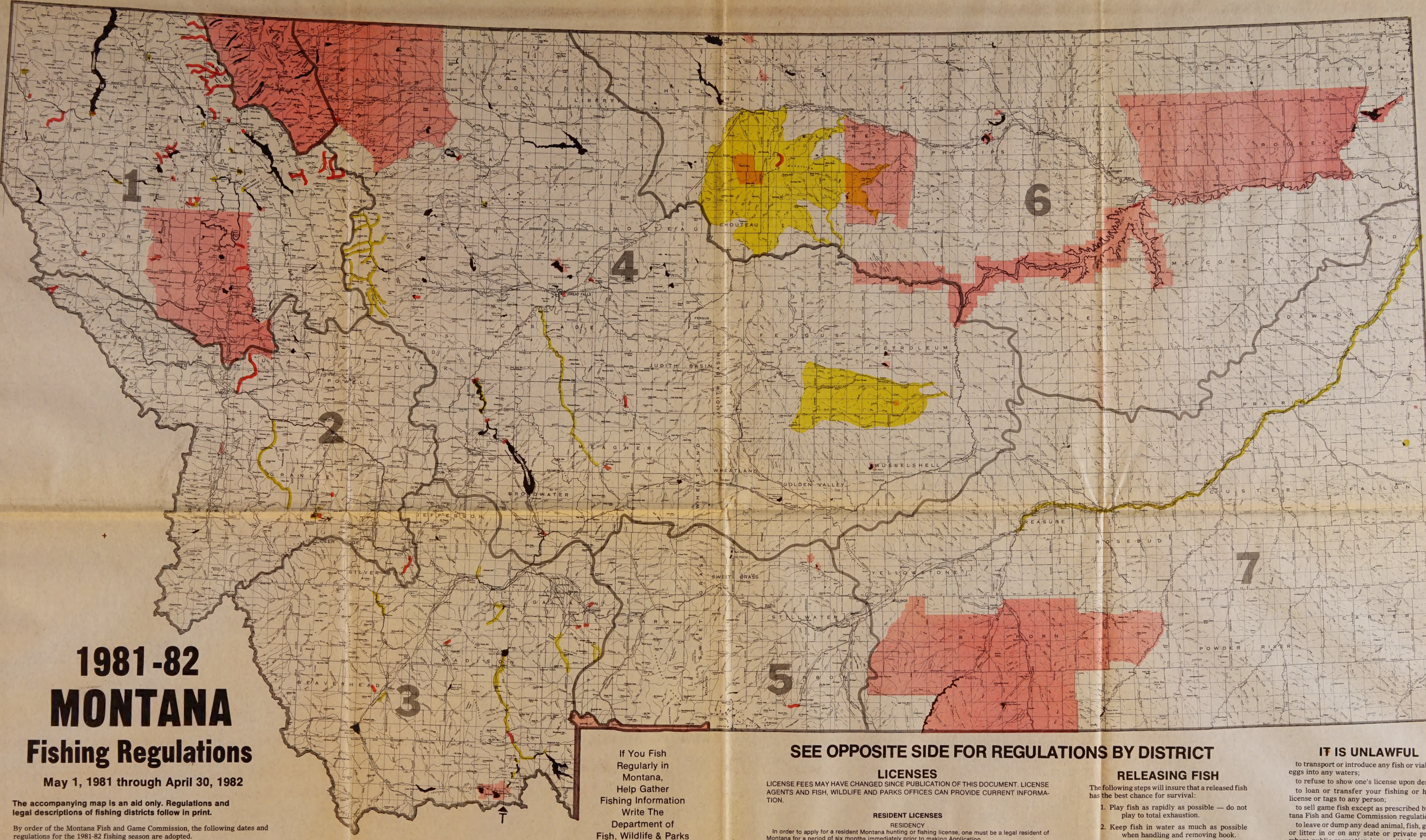

1981-82

MONTANA

Fishing Regulations

May 1, 1981 through April 30, 1982

The accompanying map is an aid only. Regulations and legal descriptions of fishing districts follow in print.

By order of the Montana Fish and Game Commission, the following dates and regulations for the 1981-82 fishing season are adopted.

Montana Fish and Game Commission
James W. Flynn, Secretary
January 9, 1981

To be in full force and effect through April 30, 1982. All regulations are subject to change by the commission.

LICENSE REQUIREMENTS

A fishing license is a permit for the lawful holder thereof to fish for and possess any fish within the state as authorized by fishing regulations. This includes commercial whitefish fishing in which case the license must be validated by an authorized Fish, Wildlife, and Parks Department employee. There is no charge for this validation.

Residents — Each resident 15 years and older must have a license to fish. Residents 14 years old or younger may fish without a license but must observe limits and all other fishing regulations.

Free fishing permits are available from heads of respective institutions for patients at veterans' administration hospitals and for residents of state institutions other than the state penitentiary. Disabled residents who have a permanent physical or mental condition that prevents them from doing substantial gainful work may get free permits to fish from the Department of Fish, Wildlife, and Parks upon certification of disability by a doctor licensed to practice medicine in Montana.

Nonresidents — All nonresidents 15 years and older must have a fishing license to fish. Nonresidents 14 years old or younger may fish without a license when accompanied by an adult with a valid Montana fishing license. The total number or pounds of all fish taken by the licensed adult and all persons 14 or younger, accompanied by such licensed adult, shall not exceed one legal limit. However, a nonresident of any age may purchase a nonresident fishing license and be entitled to take a legal limit of fish.

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COLOR CODES

Colored portions of map indicate special regulations apply there. For details refer to matched colors under regulations by district.

▨ **FISHING DISTRICT BOUNDARIES**
🟥 **CLOSED TO FISHING ALL YEAR**
🟨 **DATES, HOURS, OR LIMITS MORE RESTRICTIVE THAN THOSE FOR GENERAL FISHING**
🟧 **INDIAN RESERVATIONS, NATIONAL PARKS AND NATIONAL WILDLIFE REFUGES**

If You Fish
Regularly in
Montana,
Help Gather
Fishing Information
Write The
Department of
Fish, Wildlife & Parks
For A Fisherman's Log

Fisherman's
Log

Two hundred ninety-three thousand copies of this public document were published at an estimated cost of $0.046 per copy for a total cost of $13,439.05 which includes: $9,039.05 for printing and $4,400.00 for distribution.

SEE OPPOSITE SIDE FOR REGULATIONS BY DISTRICT

LICENSES

LICENSE FEES MAY HAVE CHANGED SINCE PUBLICATION OF THIS DOCUMENT. LICENSE AGENTS AND FISH, WILDLIFE AND PARKS OFFICES CAN PROVIDE CURRENT INFORMATION.

RESIDENT LICENSES

RESIDENCY

In order to apply for a resident Montana hunting or fishing license, one must be a legal resident of Montana for a period of six months immediately prior to making Application.

Excepting for holders of Resident Sportsman Licenses, conservation licenses are prerequisite to purchase of fishing licenses.

RESIDENCY STATEMENT

Montana residents who were issued plastic cards for the 1979 or 1980 seasons should take their cards to a license dealer. The dealers will issue 1981 residency statements and validate plastic cards through 4/30/82	$ 1.00
Residents 62 or older need only a plastic card and residency statement or a temporary conservation license to fish and hunt upland game birds other than turkeys.	
Resident Fishing License	$ 5.00
Resident Sportsman's License (includes Conservation License, 1 deer, 1 elk, 1 black bear, game birds and fishing)	$ 35.00

NONRESIDENT FISHING LICENSES

A Wildlife Conservation License is required before fishing licenses may be purchased. You may apply for other licenses at the same time you apply for a conservation license.

Nonresident Conservation License	$ 1.00
Nonresident Season Fishing License	$ 20.00
Nonresident Temporary Fishing License (6 days)	$ 10.00
Nonresident Temporary Fishing License (1 day)	$ 2.00
Nonresident Fish, Bird, and Big Game License (available from Helena, Montana Fish, Wildlife and Parks office only) includes an elk tag, deer "A" tag, black bear tag, authorizes hunting of game birds and fishing. Quota of 17,000	$225.00

LICENSE FEES NONREFUNDABLE

RELEASING FISH

The following steps will insure that a released fish has the best chance for survival:

1. Play fish as rapidly as possible — do not play to total exhaustion.
2. Keep fish in water as much as possible when handling and removing hook.
3. Remove hook gently — do not squeeze fish or put fingers in gills.
4. If deeply hooked — cut line — do not pull hook out. Most fish survive with hooks left in them.
5. Release fish only after its equilibrium is maintained. If necessary gently hold fish upright facing upstream and move fish slowly back and forth.
6. Release fish in quiet water close to the area where it was hooked.

CHECKING STATIONS

Fishermen and hunters are required to stop at checking stations on their routes of travel to and from fishing and hunting areas.

TO REPORT VIOLATIONS

If you are unable to contact a local warden or member of the sheriff's office, call toll-free 800-332-6117.

IT IS UNLAWFUL

to transport or introduce any fish or viable fish eggs into any waters;

to refuse to show one's license upon demand;

to loan or transfer your fishing or hunting license or tags to any person;

to sell game fish except as prescribed by Montana Fish and Game Commission regulations;

to leave or dump any dead animal, fish, garbage or litter in or on any state or private property where public recreation is permitted;

to use any carbide, lime, giant powder, dynamite, or other explosive compounds, or any corrosive or narcotic poison or to have any of the same in one's possession within one hundred (100) feet of any streams where fish are found, for the purpose of stunning or killing fish.

to hire or retain an unlicensed outfitter or guide;

to waste any part of game fish suitable for food.

It is unlawful to operate upon Montana waters a boat which:

is not properly licensed and numbered with registration card carried in boat;

is not carrying equipment required by the Montana water Safety Law (copies available from Montana Department of Fish, Wildlife and Parks.)

does not have one serviceable, Coast Guard approved personal flotation device for each passenger. Persons under 12 years old must wear PFD's when boat is in motion and is less than 26 feet long.

1981-82 GENERAL REGULATIONS

DAILY AND POSSESSION LIMITS

When weighing and measuring fish to determine limits, fish may have entrails removed but must have their heads and tails attached to their bodies.

Daily limit shall mean the numbers or pounds of fish that may be legally taken during a calendar day. No person shall take or possess more than the daily limit of fish unless otherwise specified under district regulations.

Possession limit shall mean the number or pounds of fish which may be in one person's possession anytime in any form — fresh, stored in freezers or locker, salted, smoked, dried, canned, or otherwise preserved.

Refer to District Regulations for respective daily and possession limits.

SEASONS:

All dates given are inclusive dates. Where dates specify an open season, fishing is closed throughout the remainder of the year. An open season is for all species unless otherwise specified.

FISHING HOURS:

Fishing is allowed at all hours during open fishing seasons except on Holter Lake and on other posted waters.

GAME FISH:

All species of the family Salmonidae (chars, trout, salmon, grayling, and whitefish); all species of the genus Stizostedion (sandpike or sauger and walleye pike or yellow pike-perch); all species of the genus Esox (northern pike, pickerel, and muskellunge); all species of the genus Micropterus (bass); all species of the genus Polyodon (paddlefish); all species of the family Acipenseridae (sturgeon); all species of the genus Lota (burbot or ling); and the species Ictalurus punctatus (channel catfish).

COLOR CODES

🟥 Closed To Fishing All Year

🟨 Dates, hours or limits more restrictive than general

MEANS OF TAKING:

Only a single line with hook or hooks, with or without a pole, may be used for fishing unless otherwise specified in district regulations. The pole or line must be in immediate control.

These provisions also apply to commercial whitefish fishing as provided under district regulations.

Setlines may be used as provided under district regulations. Setlines are lines that may be unattended. They may include poles and tipups.

A screen or a net not to exceed four (4) feet in length may be used to take sculpins (Cottus) for bait. Otherwise, use or possession of minnow seines, snares, or fish traps is unlawful except as provided under district regulations.

LURES AND BAIT:

Artificial lures shall include any lure (including flies) that is man-made in imitation of or as a substitute for natural bait. Artificial lures do not include fish eggs or other chemically treated or processed natural baits or foods.

Sculpins may be used live for bait statewide, except in waters limited to artificial lures and in the Madison River between McAtee Bridge and Ennis Lake. Otherwise live fish may not be used for bait except as provided under district regulations.

Carp or goldfish may not be used in any form as fish bait. Other fish may be used dead as bait if they have their heads and entrails removed, or if they have been preserved or frozen, except in waters limited to artificial lures only.

Persons fishing in waters closed to the use of live fish for bait may not have live bait fish in their immediate possession.

CHECKING STATIONS:

Fishermen and hunters are required to stop at checking stations on their routes of travel to and from fishing and hunting areas.

CLOSED WATERS:

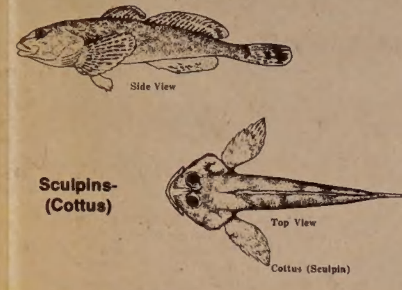
All waters operated by the Montana Department of Fish, Wildlife and Parks and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service as fish hatcheries and rearing ponds shall be closed to fishing at all times. Water in which the Department of Fish, Wildlife and Parks is operating fish traps and other special structures shall be closed to fishing as posted. Certain water supply lakes and streams and hazardous areas are closed as posted.

CHILDREN'S FISHING WATERS:

Waters posted as Children's Fishing Waters are closed to fishing during the entire year to persons thirteen (13) years of age and older.

BEAVER PONDS, IRRIGATION CANALS AND DITCHES:

Impoundments formed by beaver dams on streams are governed by the same regulations as govern the streams. Man-made irrigation canals and ditches are open the year around unless shown otherwise under district regulations.



Sculpins-
(Cottus)

NATIONAL PARKS, INDIAN RESERVATIONS, AND WILDLIFE REFUGES:

Certain waters on National Parks, Indian Reservations, and National Wildlife Refuges may have special regulations or permits that apply to their individual areas. Specific information may be obtained from the headquarters of the park, reservation, or refuge involved.

USE OF BOATS:

The use of boats is prohibited or restricted on many waters. See Boating Regulations available from Montana Department of Fish, Wildlife and Parks.

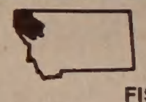
SIZE OF HOLE FOR ICE FISHING:

The maximum size hole that may be cut for ice fishing is 144 square inches. This does not apply to waters open to fishing through the ice with spear or gig.

MONTANA OUTDOORS

is a beautiful, full-color outdoor magazine for the entire family. This official publication of the Montana Department of Fish, Wildlife and Parks is published six times per year.

Contact the Montana Department of Fish, Wildlife and Parks, Helena, Montana 59620 for further information. Free sample copies are available upon request.



Northwestern Montana

FISHING DISTRICT 1

CLARK FORK RIVER DRAINAGE BELOW MOUTH OF FLATHEAD RIVER, FLATHEAD RIVER AND KOOTENAI RIVER DRAINAGES

FISHING SEASONS

STREAMS

Open third Saturday in May through November, with the following exceptions:

Open entire year — Little Bitterroot River below its tunnel, Ashley Creek below Smith Lake, Flathead River below Kerr Dam, Kootenai River, Clark Fork River, and Whitefish River from Whitefish Lake to Montana State Highway 40 Bridge.

🟥 **Closed entire year** — Rogers Lake spawning inlet. The following tributaries of North Fork Flathead River: Big Creek, Coal Creek and all their tributaries, Whale Creek and its tributaries below Whale Creek Falls, Trail Creek (Yakinikak) and its tributaries below mouth of Thoma Creek. The following tributaries of Middle Fork Flathead River; Granite, Morrison, Lodgepole, Long Creeks and their tributaries. South Fork of Flathead River downstream from Hungry Horse Dam to "Devil's Elbow" as posted. Highway 40 Bridge over Flathead River as posted. Herrig Creek, tributary to Little Bitterroot Lake. Rand, Green Mountain, and Fish Creeks, tributaries of Ashley Lake. Donaldson and Freeland Creeks, tributaries of Lake Mary Ronan. Ashley Creek from the Thompson Falls public water supply intake to its source. Hell Roaring Creek, water supply for Polson, and its lakes from outlet of lower lake to its source. Crow Creek and its tributaries above intake for Ronan water supply to its source. Hot Springs Creek and its tributaries from Hot Springs public water supply intake to its source. Flower Creek and its artificial impoundments from Power Dam to its source, excluding the natural lakes. O'Brien Creek from Troy city water intake to a point one-fourth (¼) mile upstream as posted. Haskell Creek and tributaries from Whitefish public water intake to its source. Libby Dam structure as posted.

LAKES AND RESERVOIRS

Open entire year with the following exceptions:

🟥 **Closed entire year** — Cedar Creek impoundment, Columbia Falls water supply.

🟨 **Open third Saturday in May through September** — Kilbrennan Lake.

🟨 **Open third Saturday in May through March of the following year** — Lake Mary Ronan.

🟨 **Open December 1 through September of the following year** — Loon Lake tributary to Pipe Creek, 15 miles northwest of Libby.

SPECIAL SEASONS

BOW AND ARROW AND SNAGGING — All waters open to angling are open to bow and arrow hunting and snagging nongame fish.

SNAGGING FOR SALMON — **Open September 1 through December — All waters except those closed entire year** and 🟨 Hatchery Bay of Flathead Lake near State Fish Hatchery at Somers as posted until spawn taking is completed.

SPEAR FISHING — Persons swimming or submerged may take nongame fish with aid of rubber or spring-propelled spears in all waters open to fishing except Lower and Middle Thompson Lakes, Echo, Peterson, Abbot near Bigfork; Lake Blaine near Kalispell, Loon and Horseshoe Lakes near Ferndale; Murphy Lake near Fortine, Blanchard Lake near Whitefish and Lake Mary Ronan.

December 1 through March of the following year — Northern pike and nongame fish may be taken by spear or gig through the ice only from Echo Lake, Upper and Lower Stillwater Lakes.

SPECIAL FISHING RESTRICTIONS — **Libby Dam** — Fishing from boats or other floating craft is prohibited in Lake Koocanusa from Libby Dam upstream to first log boom and in Kootenai River from Libby Dam approximately 500 yards downstream to David Thompson bridge as posted. Fishing is prohibited from Libby Dam structure as posted.

EXTENDED WHITEFISH SEASON — Open December 1 through March of the following year — All waters except Kilbrennan Lake and waters closed entire year.

COMMERCIAL WHITEFISH FISHING — Open entire year for the catching of whitefish for commercial sale: those portions of Clark Fork River from mouth of Flathead to Idaho border including mainstem impoundments, Flathead Lake and Flathead River from junction of North and South Forks to Clark Fork, and Kootenai River from Libby Dam to Idaho border.

FISH SIZE LIMITS

Bull Trout (Dolly Varden)

The minimum size of bull trout (Dolly Varden) which may be taken in the North Fork, and Middle Fork of Flathead River and their tributaries and South Fork of Flathead River below Hungry Horse Dam, main Flathead River above Kerr Dam, Flathead Lake, and that portion of Swan River below Big Fork Dam shall be no less than eighteen (18) inches long with head and tail attached to body.

BAIT

(Use of live Fish for Bait)

Sculpins (Cottus) are the only fish that may be used live as bait. See "Lures and Bait" under General Regulations.

DAILY AND POSSESSION LIMITS

Unless otherwise specified, the following limits are both daily and possession limits. Limits are in numbers of fish, except where poundage limits are specified.

Two (2) fish may be taken regardless of weight limits. Each fisherman may take all of the following limits:

1. Brown trout, cutthroat trout, rainbow trout, golden trout, lake trout, bull trout (Dolly Varden) and grayling — Ten (10) pounds and one (1) fish or ten (10) fish, whichever is reached first in any combination.
2. Brook trout — Ten (10) pounds, no number limit.
3. Bass — Five (5).
4. Walleye and northern pike — Fifteen (15) in any combination.
5. Salmon — Except at Lake Mary Ronan. Daily — Thirty-five (35) whether taken by angling or snagging. Possession — Seventy (70) whether taken by angling or snagging.

🟨 Lake Mary Ronan — During regular angling season — Ten (10) daily and possession. During snagging season — Thirty-five (35) daily, seventy (70) possession.

6. Whitefish — Thirty (30) daily and sixty (60) possession except the limit for whitefish taken for sale as provided in these regulations is one hundred (100) daily and possession.

It shall be unlawful to take or possess any sturgeon of the genus Acipenser (white sturgeon).

There is no limit on burbot (ling) and nongame fish.

NETS

(Use of)

Use of nets or traps for catching fish other than sculpins (Cottus) is prohibited. This does not prohibit the use of a landing net for landing hooked fish. A screen or net not to exceeed four (4) feet in length may be used to take sculpins (Cottus).

West Central Montana

FISHING DISTRICT 2

CLARK FORK RIVER DRAINAGE (Defined as Clark Fork River Drainage above mouth of Flathead River)

FISHING SEASONS

STREAMS

Open third Saturday in May through November, with the following exceptions:

Open entire year — Clark Fork River below Warm Springs Creek in Deer Lodge County, Clearwater River below Lake Inez fish barrier, Big Blackfoot River below Scotty Brown bridge, Bitterroot River downstream from Stevensville bridge.

🟥 **Closed entire year** — Rattlesnake Creek and tributary streams from Missoula water supply dam of Montana Power Company to its source. Basin Creek from lower Butte water supply reservoir dam to its source, including all reservoirs and tributaries. Silver Creek above Saltese water supply intake.

🟥 **Open July 1 through April 30** — Streams tributary to Medicine Lake near Philipsburg.

LAKES AND RESERVOIRS

Open entire year with the following exceptions:

🟥 **Closed entire year** — Fred Burr Lake, Philipsburg water supply, Georgetown Lake pump station area approximately three hundred (300) feet along shore and one hundred (100) feet out into lake as designated by signs and buoys.

🟨 **Open third Saturday in May through November** — Echo Lake.

🟨 **Open third Saturday in May through October and third Saturday in December through February of following year** — Georgetown Lake.

🟨 **Open July 1 through April 30** — Medicine Lake near Philipsburg.

🟨 **Open third Saturday in May through September 15** for catch-and-release fishing, artificial lures only: All waters in Anaconda settling pond area east of Mill-plus-Willow Bypass Channel and south of Pond Two and dike.

SPECIAL SEASONS

BOW AND ARROW AND SNAGGING — All waters open to angling are open to bow and arrow hunting and snagging of nongame fish.

SNAGGING FOR SALMON — Open September 1 through December — Georgetown Lake and tributaries and Clearwater Drainage except upstream from outlet of Placid Lake as posted.

SPEAR FISHING — Persons swimming or submerged may take nongame fish with aid of rubber or spring-propelled spears in all waters open to fishing.

EXTENDED WHITEFISH SEASON — Open December 1 through March of the following year — All waters, except waters closed entire year and waters posted as closed to fishing.

SPECIAL ICE FISHING REGULATIONS — Special regulations apply to Georgetown and Browns Lake. Contact Department of Fish, Wildlife and Parks for details.

🟨 **ROCK CREEK - SPECIAL REGULATIONS** — Rock Creek from mouth of Butte Cabin Creek to mouth of Big Hogback Creek. Artificial lures only, third Saturday in May through November. (See Lures and Bait under General Regulations)

🟨 Limit No. 1 — **Brown trout, cutthroat trout, rainbow trout, bull trout (Dolly Varden) and grayling.** Catch and release only.

🟨 Limits 2 through 5 are the same as those listed under DAILY AND POSSESSION LIMITS for the rest of the fishing district.

🟨 Rock Creek from its mouth to mouth of Butte Cabin Creek and from mouth of Big Hogback Creek to mouth of West Fork of Rock Creek. Artificial lures only, third Saturday in May through November for persons 15 years and older. Fishermen 14 years and younger may use bait.

🟨 Limit No. 1 — **Brown trout, cutthroat trout, rainbow trout, bull trout (Dolly Varden), and grayling.** Three (3) fish per day, only one of which may be over 14 inches. This is both a daily and possession limit.

🟨 Limits 2 through 5 are the same as those listed under DAILY AND POSSESSION LIMITS for the rest of the fishing district.

BAIT

(Use of Live Fish for Bait)

Sculpins (Cottus) are the only fish that may be used live as bait. See "Lures and Bait" under General Regulations.

DAILY AND POSSESSION LIMITS

Unless otherwise specified, the following limits are both daily and possession limits. Limits are in numbers of fish, except where poundage limits are specified.

Two (2) fish may be taken regardless of weight limit. Each fisherman may take all of the following limits:

1. **Brown trout, cutthroat trout, rainbow trout, golden trout, lake trout, bull trout (Dolly Varden), and grayling** — Ten (10) pounds and one (1) fish or ten (10) fish, whichever is reached first in any combination. Exception: See Rock Creek Special Regulations.
2. **Brook trout** — Ten (10) pounds, no number limit.
3. **Bass, walleye, and northern pike** — Fifteen (15) in any combination.
4. **Salmon** — Ten (10) except during snagging season when daily limit shall be thirty-five (35) and possession limit seventy (70). In Georgetown Lake and tributaries there shall be no daily or possession limit.
5. **Whitefish** — Thirty (30) daily and sixty (60) in possession.

There is no limit on nongame fish.

NETS

(Use of)

The use of nets or traps for catching fish other than sculpins (Cottus) is prohibited. This does not prohibit the use of a landing net for landing hooked fish. A screen or net not to exceed four (4) feet in length may be used to take sculpins (Cottus).

FISHING DISTRICT 3

JEFFERSON RIVER, MADISON RIVER, AND GALLATIN RIVER DRAINAGES

FISHING SEASONS

STREAMS

Open third Saturday in May through November, with the following exceptions:

Open entire year — Gallatin River from Yellowstone National Park boundary to confluence with Missouri River, East Gallatin River below mouth of Bozeman (Sourdough) Creek, Jefferson River, Ruby River below Ruby Dam, Madison River below Ennis Lake, Beaverhead River below Pipeorgan Bridge, Alder Gulch Creek and Dredge Ponds from mouth to Virginia City, Mill Creek near Sheridan.

🟥 **Closed entire year** — Madison River from mouth of Squaw Creek to mouth of Wolf Creek. The following streams are closed from city water supply intake to a point one thousand (1,000) feet upstream as posted. Indian Creek near Sheridan, Rattlesnake Creek near Dillon, and Middle Fork Hyalite, Bozeman (Sourdough) and Lyman Creeks near Bozeman.

🟨 **Open third Saturday in May through February of the following year** — Madison River from Hebgen Dam to mouth of Squaw Creek and from mouth of Wolf Creek to Ennis Lake.

🟨 **Open third Saturday in July through November** — East Fork and West Fork of Hyalite Creek.

🟨 **Open third Saturday in June through November** — Norwegian Creek, South Willow Creek, and North Willow Creek downstream from Highway 287 bridges at Harrison to Willow Creek Reservoir.

🟨 **Open third Saturday in May through September** — Boulder River from its mouth upstream approximately four airline miles to bridge in T2N, R3W, S24.

LAKES AND RESERVOIRS

Open entire year with following exceptions:

🟨 **Open third Saturday in May through February** of following year — Wade Lake.

🟨 **Open third Saturday in June through November** — Hidden Lake, Goose Lake, and Otter Lake.

SPECIAL SEASONS

BOW AND ARROW AND SNAGGING — All waters open to angling are open to bow and arrow hunting and snagging of nongame fish.

SPEAR FISHING — Persons swimming or submerged may take nongame fish and burbot (ling) with aid of rubber or spring-propelled spears in all waters open to fishing.

EXTENDED WHITEFISH SEASON — Open December 1 through third Saturday in May — Big Hole River, North Fork Big Hole River, Steel Creek, and Red Rock River below Lima Reservoir.

BROOK TROUT — Tributaries of Big Hole River above Divide Dam and Big Hole River and tributaries above bridge at Wisdom shall be open to fishing for brook trout entire year.

SPECIAL REGULATIONS

MADISON RIVER

🟨 Madison River from Quake Lake outlet to mouth of Squaw Creek (mouth of Squaw Creek to mouth of Wolf Creek closed to fishing) and from mouth of Wolf Creek to McAtee Bridge — catch and release fishing only for trout and grayling. Artificial lures only (see definition under Lures and Bait).

🟨 Madison River from McAtee Bridge to Ennis Lake — sculpins not allowed for bait.

🟨 Limit No. 1 — **Brown trout, cutthroat trout, rainbow trout, lake trout and grayling.** Three (3) fish per day, only one (1) of which may be over 18 inches. This is both a daily and possession limit.

🟨 Limits 2 through 5 are the same as those listed under DAILY AND POSSESSION LIMITS for the rest of the fishing district.

GALLATIN & BIG HOLE RIVERS

🟨 Gallatin River from mouth of Portal Creek to Williams Bridge — Artificial lures only.

🟨 Big Hole River from Divide Dam to Melrose Bridge — Artificial lures only third Saturday in May through November.

🟨 Limit No. 1 — **Brown trout, cutthroat trout, rainbow trout, lake trout, and grayling.** Three (3) fish per day under 13 inches and one (1) fish per day over 22 inches. This is both daily and possession limit.

🟨 Limits 2 through 5 are the same as those listed under DAILY AND POSSESSION LIMITS for the rest of the fishing district.

POINDEXTER SLOUGH

🟨 Open December 1 to third Saturday in May for catch-and-release fishing only, artificial lures only.

CLOSED TO FISHING FROM BOATS

Gallatin River from Yellowstone National Park boundary to its confluence with East Gallatin River. Madison River from Quake Lake outlet to mouth of Squaw Creek and from Varney Bridge to Ennis Bridge.

BAIT

(Use of Live Fish for Bait)

Sculpins (Cottus) are the only fish that may be used live as bait. See "Lures and Bait" under General Regulations.

DAILY AND POSSESSION LIMITS

Unless otherwise specified, the following limits are both daily and possession limits.

Each fisherman may take all of the following limits 1 through 5.

1. **Brown trout, cutthroat trout, rainbow trout, golden trout, lake trout, and grayling.**

On Streams — Five (5) fish, only one (1) of which may exceed 18 inches.

OR

On Lakes — Ten (10) pounds and one (1) fish not to exceed ten (10) fish. Two (2) fish may be taken regardless of weight limit.

The combined daily and possession limit for a person fishing both lakes and streams is ten (10) fish.

2. **Brook trout** — Ten (10) pounds, no number limit.
3. **Bass, sauger, walleye, and northern pike** — Ten (10) fish in any combination.
4. **Whitefish** — Thirty (30) fish daily and sixty (60) fish in possession.
5. Salmon — Ten (10) fish.

There is no limit on burbot (ling) and nongame fish.

NETS

(Use of)

The use of nets or traps for catching fish other than sculpins (Cottus) is prohibited. This does not prohibit the use of a landing net for landing hooked fish. A screen or net not to exceed four (4) feet in length may be used to take sculpins (Cottus).

Central Montana

FISHING DISTRICT 4

UPPER MISSOURI RIVER, MUSSELSHELL RIVER, DEARBORN RIVER, SUN RIVER, TETON RIVER, MARIAS RIVER, ST. MARY RIVER, AND UPPER MILK RIVER DRAINAGES (Defined as the Missouri River and tributary drainages from Three Forks to and including Marias River, tributary drainages of Missouri River on south side from Marias to and including Musselshell Drainage, the St. Mary River and tributary drainages and Milk River and tributary drainages in Glacier County)

FISHING SEASONS

STREAMS

Open third Saturday in May through November, with following exceptions:

Open entire year — Missouri River, Sun River below Gibson Dam, Pondera Coulee, Judith River below its confluence with Big Spring Creek, Cut Bank Creek below Blackfeet Indian Reservation Boundary, Belt Creek below bridge at Riceville, Smith River below confluence of North and South Forks Smith River, Big Spring Creek near Lewistown, Dearborn River and that portion of North Fork Dearborn River below high bridge on Highway 434, Teton River below U.S. Highway 89, Marias River, Musselshell River below bridge at Barber.

🟥 **Closed entire year** — Midvale Creek and intake reservoir from intake of Glacier Park Hotel Company water supply to Glacier Park Boundary; O'Brien Creek above Neihart public water intake; Willow Creek and its tributaries from White Sulphur Springs public water intake to its source, Missouri River immediately below Morony Dam, and Canyon Ferry Dam as posted: Missouri River 175 feet below Holter Dam; that portion of Giant Springs at Great Falls enclosed by concrete walks and masonry work.

LAKES AND RESERVOIRS

Open entire year with following exceptions:

🟥 **Closed entire year** — A portion of Lake Frances around Conrad water supply outlet as posted, approximately two hundred (200) yards of Nilan Reservoir's shoreline as posted, Hauser Dam structure and adjacent water as posted, and Toston Dam structure as posted.

🟨 **Closed between the hours of 11:00 p.m. and 5:00 a.m. Mountain Standard Time or Daylight Savings Time, whichever is in effect** — Holter Reservoir.

🟨 **Open second Saturday in June through February of following year** — Eyraud (Arod) Lakes.

SPECIAL SEASONS

BOW AND ARROW AND SNAGGING — All waters open to angling are open to bow and arrow hunting and snagging of paddlefish and nongame fish.

SETLINE FISHING — Anglers may use up to six (6) unattended setlines with up to six (6) hooks per line in following waters:

Open entire year — Lake Frances, except portion closed as posted. Missouri River from bridge at Cascade to Black Eagle Dam, Missouri River below Morony Dam, Teton River below U.S. Highway 89, Marias River in its entirety (including Tiber Reservoir), Split Rock Lake, Pishkun Reservoir, Musselshell River below bridge at Lavina.

Open December 1 through March of following year — Canyon Ferry Reservoir, Hauser Lake, Lake Helena, Helena Valley Reservoir and Missouri River from Canyon Ferry Dam to Hauser Lake.

Open second Saturday in June through February of following year — Eyraud (Arod) lakes.

SNAGGING FOR SALMON — Open September 1 through January of following year — Helena Valley Reservoir, Pishkun Reservoir, Bynum Reservoir, including inlet and outlet streams and Ackley Lake.

SPEAR FISHING — Persons swimming or submerged may take nongame fish and burbot (ling) with aid of rubber or spring-propelled spears in all waters open to fishing.

From December 1 through February of following year — Northern pike, and nongame fish may be taken by spear or gig from Eyraud (Arod) Lakes.

From December 1 through March of following year — Northern pike, walleye, sauger, burbot (ling), and nongame fish may be taken by spear or gig from: Tiber Reservoir, Marias River below Tiber Reservoir, Pishkun Reservoir, Split Rock Lake, and Lake Frances except portion closed as posted.

Commercial Whitefish Fishing — Open entire year for the catching of whitefish for commercial sale: Missouri River from Holter Dam to Black Eagle Dam.

CHILDREN'S FISHING WATERS — The following waters as posted, will be open to persons twelve (12) years of age and under entire year — Spring Creek from Milwaukee Bridge to Charles Fellows fence below Choteau, Elk Creek (South Fork Sun River) from Auchard Bridge to Boone Bridge in town of Augusta, and Fairgrounds pond, Helena.

SPECIAL ICE FISHING REGULATIONS — Special regulations apply to Lake Frances, Deadman's Basin Reservoir, Hauser Lake, and Lake Helena. Contact the Department of Fish, Wildlife, and Parks for details.

BAIT

(Use of Live Fish for Bait)

The use of sculpins (Cottus) is allowed in all waters. Other nongame fish (except carp or goldfish or rainbow smelt) may be used in Missouri River downstream from Morony Dam, in Marias River including Tiber Reservoir, in Teton River below Interstate 15 bridge near Dutton, in all streams and drainage canals of Muddy Creek drainage near Vaughn and in Musselshell River below bridge at Lavina and in Petrolia Reservoir.

DAILY AND POSSESSION LIMITS

Unless otherwise specified, the following limits are both daily and possession limits. Limits are in numbers of fish, except where poundage limits are specified.

Two (2) fish may be taken regardless of weight limit. Each fisherman may take all of following limits:

1. Brown trout, cutthroat trout, rainbow trout, golden trout, lake trout, and grayling — Ten (10) pounds and one (1) fish or ten (10) fish, whichever is reached first, in any combination, 🟨 except Smith River where five (5) fish is allowed, and in streams of Sun River Drainage above Gibson Reservoir where not more than two (2) cutthroat and/or rainbow trout may be included in this bag and possession limit.
2. Brook trout — Ten (10) pounds, no number limit, except 🟨 in Flatwillow Creek and tributaries and McDonald Creek and tributaries in Petroleum and Fergus Counties where limit is ten (10) fish.
3. Bass, sauger, walleye — Ten (10) in any combination.
4. Northern pike — Five (5).
5. Salmon — Ten (10) except during snagging seasons when daily limit shall be thirty-five (35)and seventy (70) in possession.
6. Whitefish — Thirty (30) daily and sixty (60) in possession 🟨 except limit for whitefish taken for sale as provided in these regulations is one hundred (100) daily and possession.
7. Paddlefish — One (1) daily and two (2) in possession.

There is no number limit on catfish, burbot (ling), sturgeon, and nongame fish.

FISH WEIGHT LIMIT (STURGEON): The maximum weight sturgeon (genus Scaphirhynchus) which may be taken is 16 pounds.

NET

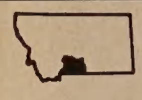
(Use of)

Use of landing nets for landing hooked fish is allowed.

In waters where use of live fish other than sculpins (Cottus) is allowed for bait, nongame species may be taken:

1. With seines not to exceed twelve (12) feet in length and four (4) feet in width; or
2. With minnow traps not to exceed eighteen (18) inches in length and ten (10) inches in diameter.

A screen or net not to exceed four (4) feet in length may be used to take sculpins (Cottus).



South Central Montana

FISHING DISTRICT 5

UPPER YELLOWSTONE RIVER DRAINAGE (Defined as Yellowstone River Drainage above and including Clarks Fork Yellowstone River)

FISHING SEASONS

STREAMS

Open third Saturday in May through November, with following exceptions:

Open entire year — Clarks Fork Yellowstone River, Yellowstone River and Bluewater Creek, Boulder River (Main Boulder River), Stillwater River, Rock Creek, and Red Lodge Creek below Cooney Dam.

🟨 **Open August 1 through November** — Lightning Creek.

🟥 **Closed entire year** — West Fork of Rock Creek from Red Lodge city water intake to mouth of Washoe Creek as posted.

OPEN ENTIRE YEAR — ALL LAKES AND RESERVOIRS.

SPECIAL SEASONS

BOW AND ARROW AND SNAGGING — All waters open to angling are open to bow and arrow hunting and snagging of nongame fish.

SNAGGING FOR SALMON — September 1 through January of following year — Dailey Lake.

SETLINE FISHING — Anglers may use up to six (6) unattended setlines with up to six (6) hooks per line in following waters:

OPEN ENTIRE YEAR — Clarks Fork Yellowstone River below bridge at Bridger.

SPEAR FISHING — Persons swimming or submerged may take nongame fish with aid of rubber or spring-propelled spears in all waters open to fishing.

EXTENDED WHITEFISH SEASON — Open December 1 through March of following year — All waters.

COMMERCIAL WHITEFISH FISHING — Open entire year for catching of whitefish for commercial sale: Yellowstone River.

OTHER: In lakes of Beartooth and Absaroka Mountain areas of Carbon, Stillwater, Sweet Grass, and Park Counties daily and possession limit on golden, cutthroat, rainbow, brown and lake trout, and grayling shall be ten (10) pounds and one (1) fish (no number limit), except for Cooney Reservoir, West Rosebud, East Rosebud, Emerald, Crater, Dailey, Wild Bill, Kersey, Rock Island, No Ketchum, Blue, Picket Pin, Greenough Lakes, and Lake Abundance where limit on these species shall be ten (10) pounds and one (1) fish not to exceed ten (10) fish.

BAIT

(Use of Live Fish for Bait)

Sculpins (Cottus) are the only fish that may be used live as bait. See "Lures and Bait" under General Regulations.

DAILY AND POSSESSION LIMITS

Each fisherman may take all of the following limits 1 through 6.

1. **Brown trout, cutthroat trout, rainbow trout, golden trout, lake trout, and grayling.**

On Streams — Five (5) fish, only (1) of which may exceed 18 inches.

OR

On Lakes — Ten (10) pounds and one (1) fish not to exceed ten (10) fish. Two (2) fish may be taken regardless of weight limit.

The combined daily and possession limit for a person fishing both lakes and streams is ten (10) fish.

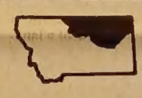
2. **Brook trout** — Ten (10) pounds, no number limit.
3. **Walleye, sauger, bass, and northern pike** — Ten (10) fish in any combination.
4. **Salmon** — Ten (10) fish, except during the snagging season when the daily limit shall be thirty-five (35) fish and possession limit seventy (70) fish.
5. **Whitefish** — Thirty (30) fish daily, and sixty (60) fish in possession except the limit for whitefish taken for sale as provided in these regulations is one hundred (100) daily and possession.

There is no limit on catfish, burbot (ling), and nongame fish.

NETS

(Use of)

The use of nets or traps for catching fish other than sculpins (Cottus) is prohibited. This does not prohibit the use of a landing net for landing hooked fish. A screen or a net not to exceed four (4) feet in length may be used to take sculpins (Cottus).



Northeastern Montana

FISHING DISTRICT 6

LOWER MISSOURI RIVER AND MILK RIVER DRAINAGES (Defined as Missouri River Drainage below Musselshell River, the Missouri River and all drainages from the north which enter Missouri River between Marias River and Musselshell River and Milk River Drainage outside of Glacier County)

FISHING SEASONS

ALL WATERS

Open entire year with following exceptions:

🟥 **Closed entire year** — Wind Creek from Clear Creek road crossing to its source, excluding Ross Reservoir. Missouri River below outlet tunnels of Fort Peck Dam as posted.

🟨 **Open third Saturday in May through November** — Streams south of Highway 2 which originate in Bearpaw Mountains.

SPECIAL SEASONS

BOW AND ARROW AND SNAGGING — All waters open to angling are open to bow and arrow hunting and snagging of paddlefish and nongame fish.

SETLINE FISHING — Anglers may use up to six (6) unattended setlines with up to six (6) hooks per line in following waters:

Open entire year — Missouri River and dredge cuts (excluding Dredge Cut Trout Pond), Milk River and its impoundments (including Fresno Reservoir), Lone Tree Creek and its impoundments, Poplar River, Redwater River, Fort Peck Reservoir, (excluding Flat Lake, and Big Dry Arm of Fort Peck Reservoir south from and including Sand Arroyo and Box Elder Creek Bays), Ester Reservoir, McNeil Slough, all waters on Medicine Lake National Wildlife Refuge, and Nelson Reservoir. In Nelson Reservoir each setline (including jugs) must be clearly marked with owner's name and address.

Open December 1 through March of the following year — All lakes and reservoirs.

Open April 1 through November — Anglers may use up to two (2) unattended setlines with not more than two (2) hooks per line in the following waters: Big Dry Arm of Fort Peck Reservoir south from and including Sand Arroyo and Box Elder Creek Bays. Setlines shall not be suspended from free-floating jugs or other devices. This does not prohibit the use of floats or bobbers attached to pole or bank lines.

SPEAR FISHING — Persons swimming or submerged may take fish with aid of rubber or spring-propelled spears as follows:

Nongame fish — all waters open to fishing.

Game fish, except bass — Fort Peck and Nelson Reservoirs.

From December 1 through March of following year — northern pike, walleye, sauger, burbot (ling), and nongame fish may be taken by spear or gig from all waters.

BAIT

(Use of Live Fish for Bait)

The use of sculpins (Cottus) is allowed in all waters. Other nongame fish (except carp, goldfish, or rainbow smelt) may be used in Dredge Cut Trout Pond; Kuester Reservoir in Richland Co.; Cole Ponds, Frenchman Reservoir, McChesney Reservoir, Nelson Reservoir, Little Warm Reservoir. Ester Reservoir and McNeil Slough in Phillips Co.; Killenbeck and Whitetail Reservoirs in Daniels Co.; Flat Lake in McCone Co.; Engstrom Reservoir, Raymond Reservoir & all waters on Medicine Lake National Wildlife Refuge in Sheridan Co.; Bainville Railroad Ponds in Roosevelt Co.; Sam Lee Reservoir in Dawson Co.; Fort Peck Reservoir, Milk River and its impoundments below Fresno Reservoir, Lone Tree Creek and its impoundments, and all streams and rivers, except Milk River and its tributaries above Fresno Reservoir and streams south of Highway 2 which originate in Bearpaw Mountains.

DAILY AND POSSESSION LIMITS

Unless otherwise specified, the following limits are both daily and possession limits. Limits are in numbers of fish.

Each fisherman may take all of the following limits:

1. Salmon, grayling, and whitefish and all trout, except lake trout — Ten (10) in any combination.
2. Lake trout — Five (5) fish.
3. Walleye and sauger — Ten (10) in any combination.
4. Northern pike — Five (5).
5. Paddlefish — One (1) daily and two (2) in possession.

There is no number limit on bass, catfish, burbot (ling), sturgeon, and nongame fish.

FISH WEIGHT LIMIT (STURGEON): The maximum weight sturgeon (genus Scaphirhynchus) which may be taken is 16 pounds.

NETS

(Use of)

Use of landing nets for landing hooked fish is allowed.

A screen or net not to exceed four (4) feet in length may be used to take sculpins (Cottus).

Hoop Nets — Hoop nets without wings or leads may be used to take nongame fish, catfish, burbot (ling), and sturgeon in Milk River downstream from Highway 2 bridge below Dodson Dam except from Vandalia Dam to a point one-quarter (¼) mile downstream and in Missouri River below mouth of Milk River. Each net must be clearly marked with owner's name and address.

Minnow Seines and Traps — In all waters where use of live fish other than sculpins (Cottus) is allowed for bait, nongame species may be taken:

1. With a seine not to exceed twelve (12) feet in length and four (4) feet in width; or
2. With minnow traps not to exceed eighteen (18) inches in length and ten (10) inches in diameter.

Southeastern Montana

FISHING DISTRICT 7

LOWER YELLOWSTONE RIVER AND LITTLE MISSOURI RIVER DRAINAGES (Defined as Yellowstone River Drainage below and excluding Clarks Fork Yellowstone River, and all other drainages in Montana southeast of Yellowstone River)

FISHING SEASONS

ALL WATERS

Open entire year with following exceptions:

🟨 Open February 1 through October — Rush Hall Pond.

SPECIAL SEASONS

BOW AND ARROW AND SNAGGING — All waters open to angling are open to bow and arrow hunting and snagging of paddlefish and nongame fish.

SETLINE FISHING — Anglers may use up to six (6) unattended setlines with up to six (6) hooks per line in following waters:

Open entire year — Yellowstone River below mouth of Clarks Fork, Little Bighorn River from its mouth to mouth of Lodge Grass Creek, Bighorn River below Two Leggins diversion dam, and all streams in Yellowstone River Drainage downstream from mouth of Bighorn River, not including Tongue River Reservoir.

Open December 1 through March of following year — All lakes and reservoirs, except Broadview Pond and Bighorn Afterbay.

SPEAR FISHING — Persons swimming or submerged may take fish with aid of rubber or spring-propelled spears as follows:

Nongame fish — All waters open to fishing.

Game fish — Tongue River Reservoir.

From December 1 through March of the following year — northern pike, walleye, sauger, and nongame fish may be taken by spear or gig from all waters downstream from mouth of Bighorn River.

SPECIAL REGULATIONS

YELLOWSTONE RIVER

Yellowstone River downstream from mouth of the Bighorn River:

🟨 (a) Paddlefish limit is two (2) per year. Any paddlefish caught must be tagged immediately and counted in this limit. Two (2) tags per licensed angler are available at no cost from Montana Department of Fish, Wildlife and Parks headquarters in Miles City, and Department personnel in Glendive, Sidney, and at Intake. Also see tagging instructions and regulations available at these locations.

🟨 (b) From May 1 through July the snagging of nongame fish is prohibited.

FISHING RESTRICTION

🟨 That portion of Yellowstone River, approximately one-quarter (¼) mile downstream from Intake Diversion, as posted, shall be closed to fishing or snagging from boats and closed to the snagging of non-game fish for the period May 1-July 31, unless opened earlier by special order.

BAIT

(Use of Live Fish for Bait)

In addition to the use of sculpins (Cottus), which is allowed in all waters, the use of other nongame fish (except carp and goldfish or rainbow smelt) will be allowed in Tongue River Reservoir, Bighorn Lake and its Afterbay Reservoir; Lindsay Reservoir in Dawson Co.; Tauck's Reservoir in Carter Co.; Sportsmen's Reservoir, Westrope's Reservoir; South Sandstone Reservoir & Baker Lake in Fallon Co.; Spotted Eagle Pond & Waddel's Pike Pond in Custer Co.; Coldwell's Reservoir in Garfield Co.; Jordan's Pike Pond in McCone Co.; Castle Rock Lake and Killen's Pike Pond in Rosebud Co.; and all streams and rivers, except Pryor Creek, Sage Creek, and Little Bighorn River upstream from mouth of Lodge Grass Creek.

DAILY AND POSSESSION LIMITS

Unless otherwise specified, the following limits are both daily and possession limits. Limits are in numbers of fish except where poundage limits are specified.

Each fisherman may take all of the following limits:

1. All trout, salmon, grayling and whitefish — Ten (10) in any combination, except Bighorn River Drainage where the limit shall be ten (10) pounds and one (1) fish not to exceed ten (10) fish.
2. Sauger and walleye — Ten (10) in any combination.
3. Northern pike — Five (5).
4. Smallmouth bass — Ten (10).
5. Paddlefish — Two (2) per year. See special regulation for Yellowstone River.

There is no number limit on largemouth bass, catfish, burbot (ling), sturgeon, and nongame fish.

FISH WEIGHT LIMITS (STURGEON): The maximum weight sturgeon (genus Scaphirhynchus) which may be taken is 16 pounds.

NETS

(Use of)

Use of landing nets for landing hooked fish allowed.

A screen or net not to exceed four (4) feet in length may be used to take sculpins (Cottus).

Hoop Nets — Hoop nets without wings or leads may be used to take nongame fish, catfish, burbot (ling), and sturgeon in Yellowstone River downstream from mouth of Bighorn River (except for approximately two hundred (200) yards below all irrigation diversion dams). Each net must be clearly marked with owner's name and address.

Minnow Seines and Traps — In all waters where the use of live fish other than sculpins (Cottus) is allowed for bait, nongame species may be taken:

1. With a seine not to exceed twelve (12) feet in length and four (4) feet in width; or
2. With minnow traps not to exceed eighteen (18) inches in length and ten (10) inches in diameter.